

Guidelines For An Advisory Committee

Functions of an Advisory Committee

(This document has been established as guidelines for best practices in creating and working with an advisory committee. In Kentucky it is a requirement that each program area have an advisory committee and that the committee meets twice a year to review the program.)

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Preliminary Steps in Establishing an Advisory Committee

Introduction

An important step in establishing, maintaining, or upgrading an existing CTE program is the organization of a local Advisory Committee.

To maintain Career & Technical Education (CTE) programs that meet current occupational needs, CTE educators rely heavily on advice from business and industry.

An Advisory Committee is a group of persons that come together to guide the development, expansion or closure of a program based on the employment needs of the community, state, regional, national, and international marketplace. The required members are a student, parent, teacher, school administrator, and business and industry representative. An explained committee may include additional members that are outside the education profession, fifty percent employers, intermediaries (Chambers of Commerce, Health Department, Extension Agents, etc.), and local board of education members regarding programs.

The general functions are to act in an advisory capacity for the development and operation of the CTE program.

Advisory Committees can assist in answering the following questions:

- Are students prepared for the future job market?
- What should the training include?
- Is curriculum addressing industry needs?
- How can instructors verify competencies to industry standards?
- Advisory Committees offer many services including:
 - Providing expert advice.
 - Assisting in public relations activities.
 - Offering different points of view.
 - Assisting in the placement of graduates.
 - Helping to keep educational programs up-to-date, recommendation of equipment, supplies or the development of simulated work environments.
 - Assisting in transition to postsecondary.
 - Offering training sites for work-based learning.

Approval

Local School boards are encouraged to develop an official policy regarding the organization and function of the advisory committee. This approval will help establish the credibility of the advisory committee.

Each CTE program should establish its own industry-unique advisory committee. A school or district may also have a school-wide steering committee that provides guidance for all CTE

programs. This committee should have representation from each program area, but it cannot take the place of the of the program advisory committees.

Goals, Objectives, and Activities of an Advisory Committee

Advise on short- and long-range plans:

- Review existing local and state board of education policies on career education.
- Review local district annual and long-range (4-5 years) education plan.
- Help schools set priorities for CTE expenditures.
- Review local needs assessment and recommend actions based upon the findings.
- Assist local board of education with development of program evaluation procedures.

Evaluate facilities and program equipment:

- Review existing equipment, facilities, and resources.
- Review lab equipment (computers, printers, etc.) and compare with the current and future technology and industry standards.
- Review lab (or shop) safety program.
- Review room (shop, lab) layout, space requirements, work stations, lighting, ventilation, etc., and compare with industry norms.

Analyze the course content:

- Review courses of study and standards of proficiency in areas which are essential to becoming successfully employed in a career path.
- Review content for courses of study and standards of proficiency in areas which are essential to becoming successfully employed in a career path.
- Review the program's sequence of courses.
- Review course outlines, occupational, program and course competencies, and career development skills.
- Help develop educational objectives.
- Review software packages, textbooks, resources and other supplementary materials.
- Advise on the extent to which academic skills and work attitudes should be taught.
- Recommend standards for work-based learning experiences and programs.

Assist with instructional and learning experiences:

- Advise on methods of instruction most appropriate for course content.
- Provide plant tours and field experiences for students and teachers.
- Identify or suggest resource personnel to enrich the instructional content.

- Assist in establishing training stations for students to obtain appropriate occupational work experience.
- Assist in locating sample kits of raw materials, finished products, charts, posters, etc. for exhibit and instructional purposes in the classroom, lab, and shop.
- Assist in obtaining school equipment and supplies on loan, as gifts, or at special prices.
- Support Career & Technical Student Organizations by sponsoring incentives, prizes, and scholarships.
- Suggest qualified persons for teacher vacancies or as substitutes for occupation-based positions.
- Participate as a resource person to enhance the instructional process.

Assist in promoting education:

- Provide news stories concerning CTE programs to the local news media.
- Participate in multi-media programs designed to promote the programs.
- Testify in support of career and technical education at meetings which may be called by local and state officials, boards, and legislative groups.
- Encourage other businesses to stimulate development of work experience programs.
- Build interest and understanding between the school and community organizations.
- Present at the KACTE Conference.

Organization and Operation of an Advisory Committee

Considerable attention should be given to the careful selection of members of the local advisory committee.

Membership

The composition of the advisory committee must include business and industry, parents, students, teachers and administrators. It is suggested that the size of the committee be from 7-9 members (an odd number eliminates tie votes).

It is best practice that business and industry members should make up the **MAJORITY** of the committee members.

Representation

Membership may include persons of different racial and ethnic groups, disabled, disadvantaged, men and women with backgrounds and experiences in gender issues in job training and employment.

Qualifications

The membership of the committee should include individuals who possess knowledge and work experiences which are representative of the occupational area served by the program, and are representative of the total community.

Characteristics

Candidates for membership should be civic-minded, cooperative, responsible and productive people who possess integrity. They should express interest, willingness, commitment and time availability to serve the advisory committee.

Selection

The members may be recommended by education, business, industry and labor leaders and the general public. Final appointment should be by the school administration.

Length of Term and Member Replacement

The replacement of members should be on a regular and staggered basis according to the length of appointment established. Advisory committee members generally serve a three-year term; alternate terms of appointment of one, two, and three years may be considered. Contributing members can be asked to renew for subsequent three year terms.

Rotating committee membership helps prevent “burning out” valuable volunteers. Recruiting new members will also increase awareness of the program within the industry and the community.

Structuring the Committee’s Leadership

The primary function of the Chair is to provide leadership at all meetings. Candidates for this position should demonstrate public speaking and human relations skills, as well as an ability to organize and conduct orderly and productive meetings.

The Chair, selected by the advisory committee members, shall not be an employee of the school. The Chair should involve all members to participate in the decision-making process. This will ensure the continued participation and interest of committee members.

The Vice-Chair is to serve in the absence of the Chair and to assist in the planning and development of all committee activities, including the regular meetings.

The Secretary plays an essential role on any productive, informed committee. The Secretary is responsible for recording the minutes of each meeting and for the timely preparation and mailing of the minutes, meeting agenda, and correspondence. These documents should be sent to all committee members, school administrators and other interested parties.

Policies and Procedures for the Advisory Committee

Operational Guidelines: A written set of policies outlining committee activities such as membership selection, term of appointment, standing or ad hoc committee responsibilities and membership duties should be developed locally and be relevant to local needs. Long range goals and objectives should be developed and reviewed annually.

Meeting Scheduling: A minimum of two meetings **MUST** be conducted annually according to Perkins regulations. However, more meetings may be necessary to effectively carry out the needs of the program. Goal oriented meetings will provide productive results and will ensure an efficient utilization of the time and potentiality of committee members.

Agenda: An agenda should be prepared for each scheduled meeting and distributed to members before the meeting when the notice of a meeting is sent. The agenda should include:

- Roll call
- Introduction of guests
- Approval of minutes
- Special presentations
- Financial report (if any)
- Communications
- Committee reports
- Unfinished business
- New business
- Adjournment

Call to Order and Adjournment: Meetings should have a definite starting and adjournment time. The Chair must make a strong effort to begin the meeting on time, move through the agenda in a businesslike manner allowing for sufficient discussion, and adjourn the meeting at the scheduled time.

Minutes: Minutes are kept by the committee secretary and distributed to the membership prior to the meeting to allow for review. Minutes and other advisory committee activity records should be made available for public review in a convenient location.

Recognizing the Work of the Advisory Committee

The committee should provide recognition for members who have contributed considerable time and effort to the advisory committee. An appropriate method might be the awarding of a certificate of appointment and certificate of appreciation of service signed and presented by the local school board. Releases to the news media on committee activity can also provide recognition. The following are additional suggestions for recognition of committee members:

Publications: The names and pictures of committee members should appear in school annuals, newspaper articles, brochures, etc.

School Activities: Members may be asked to participate in a CTE employer/employee banquet, graduation or other school events.

Letters: Members should receive letters of appreciation at appropriate times, such as at the end of the year, at term end, holidays, etc.

Concluding Advice

- Hold meetings on a regular basis. **It is required that advisory committees meet at least two times a year** or more often as needed.
- A Career & Technical Education program coordinator/instructor or administrator should not serve as Chair of the advisory committee.
- Keep formal minutes of the advisory committee meetings. Advisory committee recommendations should be noted within the minutes, along with responses to any recommendations made or action steps taken.